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familiar with the general outline of the papacy than for the average man whom the Home University Library intends to reach.

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THE VATICAN: THE CENTER OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD.

The Rt. Rev. EDMOND CANON HUGUES DE RAGNAU. D. Appleton & Co. 1913. Pp. 453. \$4.00.

Let no one expect to find in this beautifully printed volume any satisfactory description of the Vatican. It gives only a brief account, very much in the style of Italian guide-books. Neither let any one look for any full and intelligent study of the government of the Roman Catholic Church as centered in the Vatican. A scrappy account of the Pope and his office, his chief collaborators and the Roman Curia, nearly all of which might be compiled from easily accessible English sources, occupy, together with a few pages on the Vatican, less than one-fourth of the book (pp. 1-92). The second section of the book, comprising more than one-half, begins with a chapter on the "Organization of the Catholic World" (pp. 97-175), of some general interest as showing how well the system has been worked out. This is followed by a rambling chapter (pp. 176-288) on the "Politico-Religious History of Catholicism," a survey of the relation of the Roman Church to various countries and their governments, principally in the nineteenth century. As history this chapter is at times amusing. The chapter on the "Catholic Faith" (pp. 299-346) is a fairly clear and well-written statement, not of the faith of the Church, but of the place of the Church as the guardian of the faith, illustrated by its dealings with recent dogmatic problems. The third section of the book is a compilation on Catholicism and education. Here some interesting and apparently trust-worthy facts have been collected, in part from sources not accessible in English. "What the Catholic Church teaches" (pp. 394-433) gives a list of the various subjects on which instruction should be given in a Catholic university; but the chapter is stuffed out by a long irrelevant account (pp. 402-426) of the books of the Bible, with some quaint but probably ecclesiastically "correct" statements regarding their dates, authors, and general contents. The book concludes with a very brief description of the "Spiritual and Practical Sides of Catholicism," containing among other things a number of points of Canon Law bearing more directly on private life.

At first sight the reader is at a loss how to characterize such a book, with its feeble grasp of history, its absurdly distorted perspective, and its miscellaneous collection of material compiled chiefly from indifferent manuals. He ought, however, not to quarrel with the book until he is quite sure of the author's real purpose. In spite of the title, that purpose, one can well believe, is not to give an account of the "Vatican: the Center of Government of the Catholic World." The Vatican is for the author but a symbol. His real purpose must have been to produce a work of edification, based upon a contemplation of the Church as a divine system of world-wide activity. Everywhere, accordingly, the Roman Church is shown as always the leader of every form of spiritual progress, religious, moral, and intellectual, as subject to persecution by the powers of evil yet constantly triumphant, as traduced by Protestants and other unbelievers yet forcing its enemies to admit its claims. By its devotion, its faith, its all-embracing programme, by its very numbers, it is made to impress the devout soul. This is, doubtless, a worthy end. Possibly, in attaining it, "omissions," "exaggerated effects," and "suppressions"—faults the author finds in non-Catholic works on history—are necessary and to be tolerated by the faithful for the sake of the edification. The Church and its work are objects of faith and not merely of sight. Many of the hard realities of this present world with its intractable history may be overlooked in the more brilliant vision.

Unfortunately for the author and his purpose of edification, his literary ability is very limited, and his unctuous style, reminiscent of second-rate French devotional works, fails to transmute a crude compilation into a satisfactory picture. The unconscionable padding betrays the amateur and makes the book burdensome to read. The author's grasp of the situation is so feeble that he often misses making a good point. The book contains much many Protestants might well take to heart, but it is so mixed with false, inaccurate, and distorted statements that it will often repel where it might well attract. It stands in the way of a much better book which almost any man with scholarly instincts but as great loyalty to the Roman Church and devotion to its aims, could produce, provided he had a fair amount of literary taste and skill and more knowledge of actual religious conditions than is allowed to filter through "*la bonne presse*," the tone of which is admirably reproduced in this volume.

JOSEPH CULLEN AYER, Jr.